


This legislative session has been promising and has given us hope. Our State leaders are recognizing that it is less costly to provide reentry programs than it is to continue incarcerating people. We heard great testimony about how support services and transitional living homes changed people's lives for the better. The "Smart Justice" approach seems to be accepted and it appears as though the State of Alaska is moving more in that direction. This gives us hope that there will be more opportunity for homes like yours to be established.

We thank you for your participation on the Juneau Reentry Coalition and we look forward to partnering with Haven House to continue promoting safety in the Juneau community and helping transitioning offenders live to their full potential.

On behalf of the Juneau Reentry Coalition and with gratitude,



Kathryn Chapman, MSW  
Chair, Juneau Reentry Coalition



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P.O. Box 210188, Anchorage, AK 99521

To Whom It May Concern:

Haven House, Inc. is modeled after New Hope Safe Living House, the women's safe living home run by the Anchorage-based Alaska Correctional Ministries, Inc. (ACM). New Hope Safe Living House offers, just like Haven House will, a faith-based safe, sober, and structured living environment for women reentering to our community. We refer our residents to other agencies for services that they need in order to successfully reintegrate into our city, such as employment, mental health counseling, and substance abuse treatment. Our staff and mentors at New Hope Safe Living House provide support and resources to our residents as they readjust to life in Anchorage and our residents offer peer support to one another, bonding as a community and holding one another accountable.

Alaska Correctional Ministries has been operating for 34 years and has identified that safe and affordable housing is an urgent need for individuals who are reentering our community. In the 4 years New Hope Safe Living House has been operating in our Anchorage neighborhood, we have never had complaints or negative interactions with our neighbors. In Alaska, where 66% of former offenders will return to custody within 3 years of release and where the majority of incarcerated women have been charged with a drug-related crime, we know that women who are supported and provided with a sober, affordable home after their release are significantly less likely to reoffend. In fact, of residents who successfully complete their stay at New Hope Safe Living House, 80% continue to lead healthy, law-abiding lives after cultivating a self-sufficient lifestyle and moving on from the supportive environment of New Hope Safe Living House.

The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Task Force was created in 2010 and endorsed by Governor Sean Parnell. Their Five-Year Prisoner Reentry Strategic Plan for 2011-2016 identifies effective strategies, partners, and organizations that are capable of making Alaskan communities safer by establishing "a seamless set of best practices aimed at reducing the number of adult offenders who return to custody". The Strategic Plan lauds the faith community for its role in creating safer communities by stating that "citizens from the faith community provide much of the mentorship required to help released prisoners turn away from the negative influences that lead back to prison. Without the stabilization that comes from access to housing, employment, sober/mental health and positive peer supports, individuals ... revert back to old patterns." The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Task Force identifies Alaska Correctional Ministries by name in their Strategic Plan as the faith-based organization in Alaska that "uses best practices in ... transitional service programs" and calls ACM a "partner to turn the curve," as a partner to help create stronger and safer communities in Alaska. The Strategic Plan cites state and local faith-based organizations, just like Haven House, as additional "partners to turn the curve" and argues that more transitional community residences like New Hope Safe Living House and Haven House are needed because "far too many people coming back to their home communities are ... in need of the kind of support and care that these residences provide."

Alaska Correctional Ministries strongly supports the work of Haven House, Inc. in Juneau. We believe the successful practices of New Hope Safe Living House and Alaska Correctional

Ministries, Inc. can be replicated by Haven House. This is our opportunity to show that all members of the Juneau community deserve to be shown acceptance and forgiveness as we strive to create an Alaska that is safer for and supportive of all of our residents.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brenda M. Nagunst". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brenda" and last name "Nagunst" clearly legible, and "M." as a middle initial.

Chaplain Brenda Nagunst  
Executive Director  
Alaska Correctional Ministries, Inc.

John Shinholser  
President/Co-  
Founder

Honesty B. Liller  
CEO

Frank Brewer  
Caroline County  
Recovery Community  
Center Peer Leader

Mike Mason  
Director of  
Development

David Rook  
Intake Specialist/  
Peer Leader

Michelle Rook  
Compliance Manager

Blake Rosenbaum  
Peer Leader

Wayne Blanks  
Board Member

Nancy Spratley  
Secretary  
Board Member

Terry Kinum  
Board Member

John Rueger  
Board Member

Jimmy Brooks  
Board Member

Carol Pleasants  
Board Member/  
Vice-President

Matthew Daniel  
Board Member

Chick Jordan  
Board Member

Bernie Meyer, Jr.  
Board Member

Darin Parr  
Board Member

Dr. James Thompson  
Board Member

John Finn  
Board Member

Cynthia May  
Board Member

Wil Inge  
Board Member

Jimmy Christmas  
Board Member

Jim Walker  
Board Member



April 17, 2014

June Degnan  
President  
Haven House Board of Directors  
PO Box 20875  
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Re: Haven House in Juneau

Dear Ms. Degnan,

I am writing to support your efforts to open Haven House in Juneau Alaska. Haven House will be a recovery and reentry home for up to nine women coming out of prison.

#### **Activities in Alaska March 5 – March 11, 2014**

I know about Haven House because I was in Juneau from March 5 to March 11, 2014, on a trip hosted by the Juneau Reentry Coalition. While in Juneau, I visited the site of Haven House at 3202 Malissa Drive with Kara Nelson, one of the co-directors of Haven House.

The purpose of my trip to Juneau was to reach out to people in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction and to raise awareness and educate the public and providers about addiction and recovery.

I am Founder and President of The McShin Foundation, which was established in 2004. The McShin Foundation is Virginia's leading Peer to Peer Recovery Community Organization, which uses recovering addicts and alcoholics to educate, mentor and spread the message of recovery to individuals new in sobriety. I have also testified as an expert witness in the field of addiction to help courts determine the proper sentence for a criminal defendant who has a history of substance abuse problems. I have been working to help individuals and families in or seeking recovery from the disease of addiction since 1982.

The good news is that there are twenty million persons in this country in long-term recovery. Recovery from addiction is real. However, our jails are still full of people who have substance abuse problems. If we offer them safe, sober, supportive housing when they are released from prison, this greatly increases their chances to stay clean and sober and live a healthier life.



While in Juneau, I made a presentation to the general population at Lemon Creek Correctional Institute; met with Lemon Creek Staff; attended "Success Inside and Out;" met with persons involved with the Juneau Therapeutic Court; attended a Board meeting for the Juneau chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence; at the Alaska State Legislature, presented a "Lunch and Learn" talk for legislators and their staff on Addiction and Recovery; and met individually with twelve legislators or their staff on the same topic. My activities at the Alaska State Legislature were with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

I also presented a daylong training on "Recovery Coach Training" in Juneau, which about 50 people attended. The training teaches people in the community how to offer peer support to individuals new to sobriety. I also showed to a packed house at a local theatre a new documentary, "The Anonymous People," on 12-step programs and the historic recovery movement that is spreading across this country.

I hope that the City government in Juneau supports this vital movement and supports Haven House in opening a sober living home in Juneau dedicated to women getting out of prison. The recovery community in Juneau is alive and well and would support such a home.

### **Experience With Opening and Operating Recovery Homes**

What may be most relevant to your situation is that, since 1982, I have helped start at least 30 recovery homes in the Richmond, Virginia metropolitan area. The McShin Foundation currently operates five recovery homes in Richmond with a total of 60 beds. Our homes have a "house manager" that lives there and oversees the home. If needed, a staff is always reachable by telephone for emergencies. Many of the current and past residents of McShin Homes have a criminal record. The McShin homes accept people directly released from prison in accord with a home plan approved by the prison authorities. The Richmond Virginia area has approximately 100 recovery homes in an area of about one million people.

Based on this experience, I can say with confidence that a well-maintained and well-run recovery home does not decrease property values in a neighborhood. In fact, these homes increase property values. They are value-added to the community because they make the community safer. Most people in prison have a history of substance abuse and, when they come out of prison, if they have a safe and sober place to live with sound house rules, they are more likely to stay out of prison.

It is also my experience that the neighbors to a recovery home come to value it when they see that it is not a source of disturbance in their neighborhood. The

neighbors also come to appreciate it when they experience a loved one who is released from prison and needs a safe and sober place to live.

The residence at 3202 Malissa Drive seemed quite suitable for a recovery home. The home had nice, fairly large, common areas. The bedrooms were small but adequate for two persons. The neighborhood seemed quiet.

Recovery homes are being started all over the country because they help people lead healthier lives. Recovery homes are a mark of a community that is forward thinking. I wish you success in your efforts to open one in Juneau.

If I can provide any additional information, please contact me or Honesty B. Liller Chief Executive Officer of the McShin Foundation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. Shinholser", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John Shinholser  
President

c.c.: Honesty Liller

James R. Wakefield  
17325 Point Lena Loop Road  
Juneau, AK 99801  
907-723-2733

April 10, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lived in Alaska for the last 46 years. Except for a several month period in late 1974 and early 1975 while living in Fairbanks and working on the pipeline, I have lived in Juneau.

I was the Assistant Business Manager for the Laborers Local 942 from 1975 to 1987. I was a member of the CBJ Assembly (Valley seat) from 1976 to 1982. I was Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Labor from 1987 to 1991.

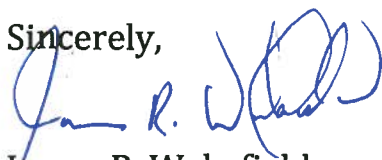
From 1992 until 2006, I worked full-time as a real estate agent. In 1996, I was President of the Southeast Board of Realtors. In 2000, I was President of the Alaska Association of Realtors.

As a Realtor, I sold mainly residential and some commercial real estate in Juneau, representing both buyers and sellers. If I was representing a seller, I had to provide a broker's opinion, with a report, recommending to the seller what price to list their home for sale. My report required evaluating the particular residence for sale, the neighborhood, and comparable homes that had sold recently and comparable homes currently on the market.

I am aware that Haven House Inc. wishes to open a residence at 3202 Malissa Drive for up to nine women who have recently been released from prison. I have inspected the exterior of the property and the neighborhood in question. I have not inspected the inside of the residence.

In my opinion if the home at 3202 Malissa Drive is used for this purpose and the home is well-maintained and the residents do not disturb the peace of the neighborhood, the home would not decrease the property values of nearby properties.

Sincerely,



James R. Wakefield

February 25, 2014

Planning and Zoning Commission  
City of Juneau  
155 S. Seward Street  
Juneau, Alaska 99801



Dear Commissioners,

In the mid-1980s a group of women saw a need in the Spokane, WA community; there were single women out on the streets all night struggling to make ends meet with nowhere to go. Even with a safe place to go many of these women returned time and time again in crises to emergency service centers. To make a change and create a service that provides support and intervention these women, led by 5 Catholic sisters, created Miryam's House in 1986.

Throughout its history Miryam's House has been in two locations. The current location on Spokane's South Hill is in a historic home in a residential neighborhood, within 3 blocks of public transit. There is no signage on the house marking it as different from its neighbors. The other location, now closed, was on Spokane's east side. It was less centrally located and in a neighborhood with higher crime rates – an environment that reinforced rather than changed the worldview of many of the homeless and low-income women served at Miryam's.

Miryam's House as it stands today blends into the neighborhood. Unless you stopped in to find out more about what happened in the house on the corner you would have no reason to think it was any different from other homes on the block. Care for the property and the surrounding neighbors are as essential to the program as care for yourself and other house-mates. There are barbecues in the backyard during the summer, pumpkins on the stoop at Halloween and smoke escapes the chimney on cold winter nights.

The work going on inside the four walls of Miryam's House is nothing short of miraculous and the women value the opportunity to create order in their lives. Calls to emergency services are rare, but do occur. Recently a participant had a stroke and an ambulance was needed; she can hardly be faulted for needing emergency medical care.

While the program is not perfect or idyllic and emergencies do happen they are far rarer than the wonderful relationships built with neighbors and the good effects created by the program – like our current Tuesday Morning Walk Group. It can be scary for a neighborhood to accept a transitional housing program but just think about the courage it takes for these women to ask for help. I would urge you to put aside your fear, as they do, and embrace community.

Sincerely,

  
Mary M. Tracey  
Development Director

Administration  
3128 N. Hemlock  
Spokane, WA 99205  
509-328-6702

EduCare  
3120 N. Hemlock  
Spokane, WA 99205  
509-325-8632

Miryam's House  
1805 W. Ninth Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99204  
509-747-9222

New Leaf Bakery Cafe  
3104 W. Ft. George Wright Dr.  
Spokane, WA 99224  
509-496-0396

Transitional Living Center  
3128 N. Hemlock  
Spokane, WA 99205  
509-325-2959

Women's Hearth  
920 W. Second Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-455-4249

1806 W 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99204  
February 7, 2014

Mary Tracey  
Miryam House  
1805 W 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99204

Dear Ms. Tracey,

I live directly across the street from Miryam House. Ours is an antique neighborhood with many antique houses. Although not palatial, these gracious Victorians are large and spacious – built for the large families typical of the early 1900's.

The neighborhood was zoned for multifamily occupancy long before I moved here in 1974. We watch with trepidation each time one of the “old ladies” goes up for sale, fearing that a developer would raze the dwelling and put in an apartment complex. Thus, we were delighted when Miryam House took over the beautiful house across the street.

Miryam House has proved to be a good neighbor. The exact number of years of their ongoing tenure is forgotten, but in that time, they have repaired their roof, put on new siding, and have made other, less obvious, repairs. Their lawn is always neat and tidy. There is never a problem with noise levels or traffic. Because of the possibility of resident's allergies, Miryam House keeps no pets, so that is never a problem.

From our point-of-view, we couldn't have a better neighbor than Miryam House.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billie Moreland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the last name.

Billie Moreland, PhD



February 7, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (JCHH), I am writing in support of Haven House, Inc. Haven House is a faith-based organization providing supported and structured living opportunities to foster healing and self-sufficiency for women coming out of prison. The Haven House program is designed to be a positive, supportive living environment which will stimulate personal and spiritual growth, encourage accountability and financial responsibility, and provide essential re-entry services during each woman's transition into our community.

Many women who exit the prison system rely on friends and family for support. Unfortunately, many of those family systems include domestic violence, substance abuse and other unhealthy family dynamics. It is our profound hope that women who desire a chance to live a healthier life are given that opportunity. Haven House is one such opportunity, and the Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness is proud to support this project.

The JCHH is comprised of organizations in Juneau providing support to those experiencing homelessness, as well as members who have been homeless themselves. JCHH recognizes that supportive re-entry services are a key strategy to prevent long-term homelessness. For women who are attempting to re-integrate into our community, re-entry services can increase their personal safety and the safety of their children.

Our organization believes that Haven House will address a critical need in Southeast Alaska while promoting safety for their participants, their families, and their neighborhood. We support their mission, and believe this program will contribute to a healthier Juneau community.

If you have any questions about the need for this program or our opinion of its potential success, please do not hesitate to contact me at 586-6623.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Cole".

Mandy O'Neal Cole  
Co-Chair, Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness





St. Vincent de Paul Society  
Juneau, Alaska

[svdpjuneau.org](http://svdpjuneau.org)

Mindy Voigt, President

Ida Barnack

Peggy Morris

Barbara Bechtold

Robert Rehfeld

Anna Marg Rear

Terry Elder

Theresa Harris

Charles Van Kirk

Peggy Morris

Jennifer Klein

Sandy Oliphant

*We provide material and  
spiritual charity and work  
for social justice for all  
people.*



## St. Vincent de Paul Society

### Diocesan Council of Southeast Alaska, Inc.

8617 Teal St., Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 789-5535 phone

[st.vincentdepaul.juneau@gci.net](mailto:st.vincentdepaul.juneau@gci.net)

(907) 789-2557 fax

April 21, 2014

Mary Alice McKeen  
Haven House Project

Ms. McKeen;

You have asked me to relate my knowledge and experience with the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program in Juneau.

As General Manager and Director of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, I have been working with this federally funded rental assistance program for almost 20 years. This year, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), the state agency that administers the program, instituted major changes to the program. While I am personally very pessimistic about its future as a result of these changes, the final impact is unknown, so I will limit my comments to the program as it is today and as it has operated for the last couple of decades.

The Section 8 voucher program provides rental assistance to households below 50% of the Juneau Area Median Income (AMI). Households that have a voucher are required to pay 30% of their household income towards the rent and no household may pay less than \$50 per month. Eligibility requirements extend beyond simple income calculations. Many households are not eligible because of a criminal conviction or past problems with public housing or voucher programs.

We manage permanent, regulated, low-income housing at six locations in Juneau. Of the 88 apartments, 70% are occupied by single person households with incomes at **30% or less** of the Juneau AMI. Their median income is \$14,040 per year. I believe this would be the income category for most Haven House residents. If you accept the federal standard for "affordable" housing at 30% of household income, then these folks could afford about \$351 per month in total housing expense (rent,



Utilities etc.). In the regular housing market all of these households would be homeless without the substantial rental assistance provided by vouchers.

A few months ago, AHFC closed the waitlist for vouchers in Juneau. At that time there were approximately 350 vouchers being utilized and around 400 households on the waitlist for one of those vouchers, if it should become available. This is consistent with utilization and waitlist statistics over the last 20 years. There have never been a sufficient number of vouchers to meet the need. Voucher opportunities would typically arise when a recipient household lost a voucher because they violated their lease, moved out of the area, died or went to prison. It is rare for a recipient household to increase its income beyond the eligibility ceiling. The number of vouchers a community has, depends on the level of funding allocated by AHFC. Funding has not increased commensurate with the increase in cost and rent rates over time. Higher rents means fewer low-income households can be supported.

There has been no new construction of low-income affordable housing in Juneau in over a decade. Between 2007 and 2012, just two apartment building fires in downtown alone removed 58 low-income affordable apartments from the community inventory. There have been other losses as well—often by sale and conversion to market rate housing. A new tax credit project is being constructed in Douglas that should provide about 30 low-income units. However, none of those are supported by subsidy. Existing vouchers may move around, but there will be no increase in the actual number of supported households. It is not likely that any prospective Haven House resident without a voucher will be able to afford the rent at that project.

Another alternative could be the St. Vincent de Paul shelter. However, our current waitlist for the shelter, as always, is over 200% and our priority is for the elderly, disabled, and families with children.

We have watched the low-income affordable housing market get tighter and tighter over the last two decades—in spite of the construction we have sponsored. This is the main reason that Juneau is Alaska's most homeless city, with the highest per capita homeless rate in the state, and one of the highest in the nation.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society strongly supports the Haven House project, as does the Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness. As the traditional sources of low-income rental assistance dry up, and as the number of households in need of that assistance continues to grow, we must find a wider variety of housing options for those in need. Haven House offers an alternative that can make a significant contribution to a specific segment of the low-income housing market. We support it, first because it expresses the larger community's commitment to our sisters in need. Second, because it diversifies the low-income affordable housing market and that increases opportunity for everyone.

Sincerely



Dan Austin, General Manager







247 S. Franklin Street  
Open 24 Hours a day  
365 days a year  
**Food  
Shelter  
Hospitality**

September 17, 2012

Dear Grant Review Team,

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Haven House's application for SSAB Tier I funds. It is absolutely clear that Haven House will provide a great service for our community and we are anxiously anticipating the day when Haven House opens its doors.

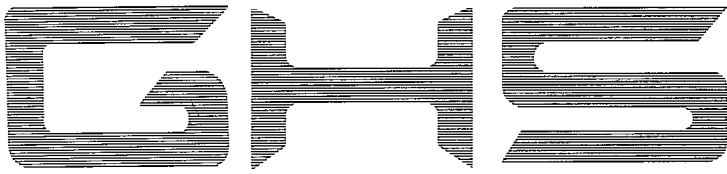
As you know, the Glory Hole is an emergency shelter, soup, kitchen, and care center. We are open 365 days of the year and provide breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, food boxes, warm day shelter, emergency shelter, and other programs and services. Our mission to provide food, shelter, and compassion to those in need.

One of the most heartbreaking aspects of operating the Glory Hole is seeing women with substance abuse issues come out of jail and stay at the Glory Hole. The first days and weeks are very positive. The women are generally busy looking for work, having interviews, and often finding jobs, getting their documents in order, applying for housing, going to AA meetings, generally trying very hard to have a good life. However, as the days and weeks go by and the women fail time after time to find housing, on account of lack of affordable housing in Juneau or because no one wants to/can rent to felons, things begin to deteriorate. The women, desperate for stable housing return to their partners, the same partners that got them into jail in the first place. They get into new terrible relationships, often prostituting themselves for housing. They start drinking and using drugs again. This happens over and over again because stable housing is essential to recovery and normalization.

Without a stable place to live, women will continue on having relapses and will continue on with the vicious cycles of being in and out of jail, in and out of abusive relationships, losing and regaining custody of their children, perpetuating homelessness, drug abuse, and violence. Haven House creates the possibility to break the cycle, to provide these women with a fighting chance of a good life, a normal life, a life in wholesome space, instead of an emergency shelter, the gutter, the bed of an abuser. If Haven House is able to operate, it will assume a very important place in the Juneau continuum of care. I strongly urge to approve Haven House's request for funding and to do everything in your power to support Haven House in any way you can.

Respectfully,

Mariya Lovishchuk  
Executive Director



GASTINEAU HUMAN SERVICES CORPORATION • 5597 AISEK STREET • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801  
*Behavioral Health Services • Community Corrections • Transitional Housing • (907) 780-4338 • Fax (907) 780-4098*

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November 27, 2013

Members of the Juneau Affordable Housing Commission,

Gastineau Human Services wholeheartedly supports Haven House Incorporated's application for a loan from the Juneau Affordable Housing Fund. This loan will help Haven House establish a supportive home for women re-entering the community from the prison system. Gastineau Human Services has been serving individuals re-entering the community from the prison system for many years, and we often see that one of the greatest hurdles to successful re-entry for women is an affordable home that is safe and supportive of their unique needs. Haven House can play a large role in overcoming this great need.

Haven House offers an innovative approach to addressing the problems that many women leaving prison must overcome. Your support through the Juneau Affordable Housing Fund will play a large role in making Haven House a community resource that Juneau can be proud of.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Pellerin'.

Michael Pellerin  
Executive Director



Love INC

Love In the Name of Christ

To Whom It May Concern:

Love INC Juneau  
PO Box 35432  
Juneau, AK 99803  
Tel: (907) 780-4090  
Fax: (907) 780-4091  
loveinc@alaska.net  
www.LoveINCJuneau.org

Nov. 25, 2013

On behalf of LoveINC, I am writing in support of Haven House Incorporated's application for funds to open a home for women coming out of prison. Haven House is a faith-based organization providing supported and structured living opportunities to foster healing and self-sufficiency for women coming out of prison. The home is designed to be a positive, supportive living environment which will stimulate personal and spiritual growth, encourage accountability and financial responsibility, and provide essential re-entry services during the resident's re-adjustment into the community. Other services offered include: case management; regular status review; compliance monitoring; relapse prevention support groups; referrals to other community services; and assistance with food, clothing, transportation, employment, and career development.

The 2010 Council of State Governments Justice Center noted "without a stable residence, it is nearly impossible for newly released individuals to reconnect positively to a community."

Haven House will be able to house nine women at any given time. According to Department of Corrections (DOC) statistics from 2011, 90 women who were convicted of offenses were released from Lemon Creek Correctional Center and 60 were released from Ketchikan Correctional Center. As Haven House is the only housing provider for women exiting prison in Southeast, we expect to operate at capacity while still serving only a small percentage of women needing housing upon their release.

I represent Love INC Juneau and we see daily evidence of the critical need for reentry programs for women. There are many single moms calling for our assistance, who desperately need the support and guidance provided by transitional housing, such as this.

Our organization believes that Haven House, Inc. will address a critical need in Southeast Alaska and we strongly urge support of their funding request. If you have any questions about the need for this program or our opinion of its potential success, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Ann Lockhart  
Executive Director

"Helping Churches Help People"



509 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Ste. 103  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
Phone: 907.279.9634  
Fax: 907.279.0148

November 14, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Volunteers of America Alaska, I am writing in support of Haven House Inc.'s application for funds to open a home for women coming out of prison. Haven House is a faith-based organization providing supported and structured living opportunities to foster healing and self-sufficiency for women coming out of prison in Southeast Alaska

Women coming out of prison face overwhelming obstacles. Given these challenges it isn't surprising that an Alaska Judicial Council study found that 66 percent of released prisoners are back in custody within three years of release. Sadly, most return to prison in the first six months.

The 2010 Council of State Governments Justice Center noted *"without a stable residence, it is nearly impossible for newly released individuals to reconnect positively to a community."*

The Alaska Prisoner Reentry Task Force Five-Year Prisoner Reentry Strategic Plan 2011-2016 notes, "the federal government and private foundations recognize the unique strengths that the faith community brings to the work of rehabilitation and successful reentry....what an untapped resource the faith community was and how much they had to offer in the pursuit of successful reentry outcomes. The program's outcomes were extremely promising...with recidivism rates among Ready4Work participants 34 to 50 percent below the national average." The strategic plan also "supports the continued expansion of programs such as Transformational Living Community and the transitional new community residences. "Far too many people coming back to their home communities are homeless and in need of the kind of support and care these residences provide. More are needed."

I represent Volunteers of America Alaska we see regular evidence of the critical need for reentry programs for women across our state. Our Grandfamilies Support Program sees many families who are shattered because of incarceration, worse yet, when Mom is released from prison she is unable to live with her children because many housing situations simply don't allow felons. This is heartbreaking for everyone.

Our organization believes that Haven House, Inc. will address a critical need in Southeast Alaska and we strongly urge support of their funding request. If you have any questions about the need for this program or our opinion of its potential success, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elaine M. Dahlgren".

Elaine M. Dahlgren  
President/CEO  
907-279-9650

Exhibit 28





National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc

211 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 102  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
Phone: 907-463-3755  
[www.ncadd-juneau.org](http://www.ncadd-juneau.org)

April 16, 2014

Haven House  
P.O. Box 20875  
Juneau, AK 99802

Dear June Degnan:

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), Juneau Affiliate supports Haven House's mission to provide safe and sober transitional housing for women exiting prison. When a person is released from prison he or she is at their most vulnerable and are likely to go back to using/abusing drugs and alcohol unless they have a safe and sober home to reside in. Haven House provides this along with peer support and connectivity to resources in the community where women can access support and treatment for mental health, drug/alcohol disorders, and/or co-occurring disorders.

Our agency encounters women on a daily basis who struggle to stay sober. We know that for many of these women a significant barrier for their recovery is the home environment and lack of positive peer support. They continue to reside with family or friends who continue to use/abuse alcohol and drugs and make unhealthy choices. Housing options are very limited in this community and so for some of these women they have no other options but to continue residing in these toxic environments. Haven House provides not only the safety and sober living, but also the peer support.

Peer support is growing in the Juneau community through agencies like NAMI, Juneau, and in the Juneau Recovery Community Organization that NCADD sponsors. There is also peer support found in the 12 step fellowships in our community. I have had the privilege to witness and hear countless stories throughout the past ten years of working in the behavioral health field about how peer support has helped men and women to get sober and live a life of recovery. Living a life of recovery is (re) building and (re) establishing relationships, employment, education, and other things that were lost or never had due to the use of alcohol and drugs. Haven House is giving women the opportunity to not only have sobriety, but a life of recovery where possibilities are endless. What a gift.

There are no transitional living houses that provide safe and sober living and support for women in Juneau. Our community needs you and we need more programs like Haven House.

Thank you for your advocacy, your hard work, and for your safe haven.

  
Respectfully yours,

Kathryn Chapman, MSW, C I  
Executive Director

Education, Information, Help and Hope

Samantha Dye  
Dye Consulting, LLC  
P.O. Box 34774  
Juneau, AK 99803

April 18, 2014

Haven House  
P.O. Box 20875  
Juneau, AK 99802

To the Members of the Board of Haven House:

I am writing this letter in support of Haven House opening a home in a residential neighborhood for women re-entering the community from prison.

In my work as an executive coach, I work with individuals and groups who want to make changes in their life. As a coach, I partner with them in that process and hold them accountable. What I have found is that for any change to occur, it has to start with a desire for change. I am in complete support of your opening a home for women who desire a change. It is clear to me that Haven House is not for all women transitioning from prison, but for those who really desire to make changes in their life.

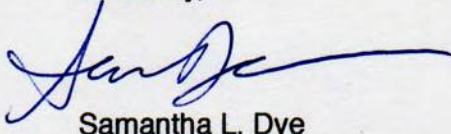
With the basis that Haven House is a place for women desiring change, I support Haven House opening this home in a residential neighborhood. In the re-entry process, the situation in which one lives can be the most influential element of success or failure. So often the situation (or home) from which one has come is not the best place to return. Having a place where women can live in a supportive *independent and interdependent* community would help women re-entering society take a large step toward success.

According to the hierarchy of needs, it is only when we have our physiological needs and our need for safety cared for that we can move on to our need to belong, our need for esteem, and our need for self-actualization. In order for women to be successful in re-entering society in every way, they need their basic need of housing cared for. Haven House provides for this basic need *and* it provides for the need of community and a sense of belonging.

For these reasons, I am in complete support of Haven House opening a home in a residential area. A residential area would give women a sense of 'normalcy' in the re-entry process. A residential home would give women a sense of physical community and hopefully lead them to deeper levels of trust and to the ability to create emotional community as well.

Opening a home in a residential neighborhood would give women re-entering society a healthy place to belong.... a place to move forward and to be successful in finding their own confidence, a place to learn how to respect others and to experience being respected, and a *home* in which to find and to shape the healthy version of who they are.

Sincerely,



Samantha L. Dye



## JUNEAU REENTRY COALITION (JREC)

### CONTACT US:

**Phone:** 907-463-3755  
**Fax:** 907-463-2540  
**Email:** [juneaureentry@gmail.com](mailto:juneaureentry@gmail.com)

### Location:

211 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 102  
 Juneau, Alaska 99801

**Website:** [www.juneaureentry.org](http://www.juneaureentry.org)



### MONTHLY MEETINGS

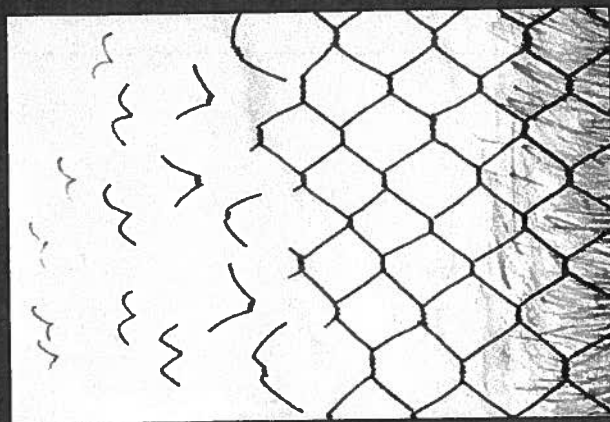
**Contact**  
[juneaureentry@gmail.com](mailto:juneaureentry@gmail.com)  
 Or 463-3755

If you are a victim of a crime and need support or services, please contact the Violent Crimes Compensation Board, toll free at:  
 1-800-764-3040

### RE-ENTRY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- The daily cost of incarceration in Alaska's Department of Corrections (DOC) is about \$159 in 2014. It costs far less than that to provide community services, like housing and employment assistance, substance abuse/mental health treatment, education and training. It is more cost-effective to help returning citizens succeed in the community, than to pay for a prison bed.
- 2 of 3 prisoners return to custody within the first 3 years of release. Most of these individuals are rearrested within the first 6 months of their release. Many report that the difficulty of getting housing, employment, training, and other supports, as a contributing factor to failing and returning to prison.
- Misdemeanants make up about 78% of the releases from Alaska's institutions, contract jails, CRCs, or electronic monitoring. Misdemeanants are released unsupervised (not on probation or parole) and therefore are released without supervision or community supports.
- Alaska's top five misdemeanor offenses are: DUI, minor assaults, driving with licenses suspended or revoked, disorderly conduct, and domestic violence assault.
- 95% of Alaska's inmates are eventually released from prison - making it critical to support rehabilitation efforts so individuals leaving incarceration are more likely to succeed after release.
- About 1,383 people participated in substance abuse treatment inside Alaska's prisons in 2013.
- In 2002, 15.39% of offenders in Alaska were incarcerated for drug or alcohol offenses. By 2011, that number increased to 19.08%.
- DOC reports that as many as 80% of Alaska's prison population has a substance use disorder, and that 42% of Alaska's prison population have an identified mental disability.
- DOC has followed substance abuse program completers for 2.5 years and is showing a 14% reduction in recidivism.
- Communities are not adequately prepared to maintain rehabilitative programming. With more community supports, the likelihood of success increases.
- DOC reports some of their top challenges include:
  1. Connecting offenders to substance abuse treatment upon release;
  2. Complicated and lengthy process to connecting offenders to entitlements;
  3. Connecting offenders with safe, sober housing upon release.
- There are approximately 255 currently housed at Lemon Creek Correctional Center (LCCC) in Juneau. 394 inmates were released from LCCC in 2012.
- The Juneau Re-Entry Coalition is working to reduce Alaska's recidivism rate, and improve public safety in Alaska's communities.

# JUNEAU REENTRY COALITION (JREC)



The Juneau ReEntry Coalition is a collaboration of individuals, community stakeholders, public and not-for-profit agencies, faith-based and business partners who are united and committed to reducing recidivism among ex-offenders returning to the community of Juneau, Alaska

## JREC WORKGROUPS

**Behavioral Health Workgroup**

**Community Education Workgroup**

**Employment, Education  
& Training Workgroup**

**Family Support Workgroup**

**Housing Workgroup**

**Peer Support Workgroup**

**Pre/Post Release Workgroup**

**To join a workgroup, email us at  
[juneautoreentry@gmail.com](mailto:juneautoreentry@gmail.com)**

### **MISSION of JREC**

Promote public safety by identifying and implementing strategies that increase a former prisoner's well-being within the community and reduces the likelihood of their return to prison through recidivating. We will accomplish this by:

- Improved communication and collaboration between Alaska Department of Corrections and the community
- Building community partnerships to strengthen local services
- Identify barriers for those being released from incarceration and taking an active role in addressing those concerns
- Promoting community educational opportunities for those releasing regarding resources
- Work in conjunction with the Alaska Reentry Task Force to inform and promote reentry efforts within Alaska



the affordability protections that implement the government housing program.

An evaluation of five such approaches in this two-part article demonstrates that successful efforts must observe six key principles:

- meeting short-term and long-term physical and financial needs;
- reinvesting excess proceeds back into affordable housing;
- guaranteeing affordability for current and future tenants;
- weeding out poorly performing owners and managers;
- providing for tenant participation in the decision-making process; and
- ensuring clarity in the governing law and regulations.

Passage of Congressman Frank's draft omnibus preservation bill would be a significant step in the right direction for several of the types of properties reviewed here. Other innovative long-term measures should be explored as well, such as providing stronger incentives to transfer these projects to mission-driven nonprofits or to local land trusts, in order to provide greater assurances of long-term public benefit from responsible recapitalization.<sup>20</sup> By combining the lessons learned from prior approaches with new innovative proposals, this important housing stock can remain a viable and valuable asset long into the future. ■

## The Importance of Stable Housing for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Each year more than 725,000 people leave state and federal prisons.<sup>1</sup> An additional 230,000 people leave county jails every week.<sup>2</sup> Formerly incarcerated individuals struggle to secure employment, obtain medical care and avoid substance abuse. According to criminal justice officials, however, finding housing is the biggest challenge faced by individuals returning to the community.<sup>3</sup> This article will identify the barriers to accessing stable housing, describe the housing arrangements of individuals returning to the community and explore the relationship between residential instability and recidivism.

### Obstacles to Stable Housing

A number of institutional and legal barriers prevent formerly incarcerated individuals from finding stable housing after release. Private housing represents 97% of the total housing stock in the United States.<sup>4</sup> Due to soaring prices, however, private housing is simply out of reach for many formerly incarcerated individuals living in urban areas.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, most landlords conduct criminal background checks on prospective tenants.<sup>6</sup> Given the short supply of affordable housing, landlords can afford to deny housing to applicants with criminal records. Screening for sex offenders is especially prevalent.

Federally assisted housing is the only option for many people leaving correctional facilities. Harsh admission

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<sup>1</sup>HEATHER C. WEST & WILLIAM J. SABOL, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, PRISONERS IN 2007 (2008), available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p07.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup>AMY L. SOLOMON ET AL., LIFE AFTER LOCKUP: IMPROVING REENTRY FROM JAIL TO THE COMMUNITY XV (2008), available at <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/centers/institutes/pri/pdfs/Final%20Life%20After%20Lockup.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup>CATERINA GOUVIS ROMAN & JEREMY TRAVIS, THE URBAN INST., TAKING STOCK: HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, AND PRISONER REENTRY 2 (2004), available at [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411096\\_taking\\_stock.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411096_taking_stock.pdf).

<sup>4</sup>JOAN PETERSILIA, CALIFORNIA POLICY RESEARCH CENTER, UNDERSTANDING CALIFORNIA CORRECTIONS 69 (2006).

<sup>5</sup>See NAT'L LOW INCOME HOUS. COALITION, OUT OF REACH 2009, <http://www.nlihc.org/oor/oor2009/data.cfm?getstate=on&getmsa=on&msa=2243&state=CA>. For example, the fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Oakland, California, is \$1,093.

<sup>6</sup>See Maria Foscarnis & Rebecca K. Troth, *Reentry and Homelessness: Alternatives to Recidivism*, 39 CLEARINGHOUSE REV. 440, 446 (2005). All 50 states allow private landlords to screen an applicant for a criminal record. *But see* Madison, Wis. Code of Ordinances, Ch. 39.03(1) and (4) (Renumbered by Ord. 12,039, Adopted 2-17-98), available at <http://www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=50000&sid=49>, Urbana, Ill., Code of Ordinances, Ch. 12 Art. III. Div. 1, §§ 12-37 and 12-64, (Ord. No. 7879-92, § 1(29), 4-24-79; Ord. No. 9798-49, § 1, 10-6-97), available at <http://www.city.urbana.il.us/>. Both Madison, Wisconsin and Urbana, Illinois passed ordinances that prevent discrimination on the basis of an arrest or conviction record.

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<sup>20</sup>Exit tax relief is one such important proposal that would help address the issue of many private owners being unwilling to sell due to the steep capital gains taxes they would incur as a result of having taken prior significant depreciation deductions. Many owners thus hold onto their property to secure the step up in basis that occurs upon transfer at death, thus eliminating both the tax revenue to the government, as well as potentially failing to recapitalize the property. Exit tax relief would eliminate this tax burden in cases of a sale to a preservation-motivated purchaser.

policies, however, prevent many people with criminal records from accessing federally assisted housing. Public housing authorities (PHAs) must reject lifetime registered sex offenders and individuals convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing.<sup>7</sup> In addition, federal law permits PHAs to deny admission to applicants with histories of violent criminal activity, drug-related criminal activity, or criminal activity that may threaten the health, safety or peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.<sup>8</sup> The statute directs PHAs to consider criminal activity that occurred within a “reasonable time” prior to the admission decision.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, some PHAs consider criminal activity that occurred as long as 10 years prior to the admission decision.<sup>10</sup>

### Housing Arrangements After Release

Because of the barriers to obtaining stable housing, many formerly incarcerated individuals end up in unstable housing arrangements. A total of 10% of parolees are homeless nationwide.<sup>11</sup> In large urban areas such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, 30% to 50% of parolees are homeless.<sup>12</sup> A large portion of formerly incarcerated individuals rely on family members to provide shelter after release.<sup>13</sup> Some family members, however, set limits on the amount of time that a returning relative can stay.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, formerly incarcerated individuals end up “shuttling” between relatives, friends, shelters and the street.<sup>15</sup> A study of men returning to the metropolitan

Cleveland area reveals the extent of the shuttling:<sup>16</sup> 63% of the study participants reported living in two, three, four, or five places within the first year after release.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the first year, 46% of the men referred to their housing arrangements as temporary and expected to move within a few weeks or months.<sup>18</sup> Conversely, a small portion of formerly incarcerated individuals manage to secure their own apartment or house after release. In a study of men returning to Chicago, only 19% of the study participants reported living in their own place 16 months after release.<sup>19</sup>

### Relationship Between Unstable Housing and Recidivism

Ultimately, many individuals are not able to avoid re-incarceration. In California, for example, 79% of parolees return to prison or abscond.<sup>20</sup> Research suggests that securing stable housing is crucial to successful re-entry. The study of men returning to the Cleveland metropolitan area found that obtaining stable housing within the first month after release inhibited re-incarceration.<sup>21</sup> As stated in an Urban Institute study, “The importance of finding a stable residence cannot be overestimated: men who found such housing within the first month after release were less likely to return to prison during the first year out.”<sup>22</sup> The study of men returning to Chicago reinforces the idea. Study participants who reported living in their own apartment or house two months after release faced a lower risk of re-incarceration.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, a study of over 40,000 individuals returning to New York City from state correctional facilities reveals the correlation between shelter use and risk of recidivism.<sup>24</sup> Individuals who entered a homeless shelter within the first two years after release faced a higher risk of re-incarceration.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps more significantly, individuals who reported living in a shelter before incarceration faced a higher risk of both shelter use after release and re-incarceration.<sup>26</sup> The figures suggest that “the crossing

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<sup>7</sup>42 U.S.C.A. §§ 1437n(f), 13663 (Westlaw Oct. 27, 2009). The ban on individuals convicted of manufacturing or producing methamphetamine does not apply to project-based Section 8, Section 202, Section 811, Section 221(d)(3), Section 236, or USDA housing. The ban on lifetime registered sex offenders does not apply to USDA housing.

<sup>8</sup>42 U.S.C.A. § 13661(c) (Westlaw Oct. 27, 2009).

<sup>9</sup>*Id.*

<sup>10</sup>See San Francisco Housing Authority Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan 2008, available at <http://www.sfha.org/about/pha/pdf/2008ACOP.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup>LITTLE HOOVER COMM’N, BACK TO THE COMMUNITY: SAFE & SOUND PAROLE POLICIES 39 (2003).

<sup>12</sup>*Id.*

<sup>13</sup>See Nancy La Vigne et al., The Urban Institute, CHICAGO PRISONERS’ EXPERIENCES RETURNING HOME 16 (2004), available at [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311115\\_ChicagoPrisoners.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311115_ChicagoPrisoners.pdf). In a study of men returning to Chicago, 88% of the men reported living with family members or intimate partners four to eight months after release.

<sup>14</sup>TRACEY L. SHOLLENBERGER, THE URBAN INST., WHEN RELATIVES RETURN: INTERVIEWS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS OF RETURNING PRISONERS IN HOUSTON, TEXAS 9-10 (2009), available at [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411903\\_when\\_relatives\\_return.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411903_when_relatives_return.pdf). The study followed family members of men and women returning to Houston. Of the family members who provided housing to a returning relative, over half imposed limits on the duration of the housing arrangements. Some of the study participants said that the returning relative could stay until he or she found an apartment or a job. Others said that the returning relative could stay as long as he or she did not use drugs or engage in criminal activity.

<sup>15</sup>JEREMY TRAVIS, BUT THEY ALL COME BACK: FACING THE CHALLENGES OF PRISONER REENTRY 219 (The Urban Inst. Press 2005).

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<sup>16</sup>CHRISTY A. VISHER & SHANNON M.E. COURTNEY, THE URBAN INST., ONE YEAR OUT: EXPERIENCES OF PRISONERS RETURNING TO CLEVELAND 1 (2007), available at [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311445\\_One\\_Year.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311445_One_Year.pdf).

<sup>17</sup>*Id.* at 3.

<sup>18</sup>*Id.*

<sup>19</sup>JENNIFER YAHNER & CHRISTY VISHER, THE URBAN INST., ILLINOIS PRISONERS’ REENTRY SUCCESS THREE YEARS AFTER RELEASE 3 (2008), available at [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411748\\_reentry\\_success.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411748_reentry_success.pdf).

<sup>20</sup>LITTLE HOOVER COMM’N, *supra* note 11, at 55.

<sup>21</sup>VISHER & COURTNEY, *supra* note 16, at 11.

<sup>22</sup>*Id.*

<sup>23</sup>YAHNER & VISHER, *supra* note 19, at 3.

<sup>24</sup>Stephen Metraux & Dennis P. Culhane, *Homeless Shelter Use and Reincarceration Following Prison Release*, 3 CRIMINOLOGY & PUB. POLICY 139 (2004).

<sup>25</sup>*Id.* at 147.

<sup>26</sup>*Id.* During the first two years after release, roughly 11% of the study participants entered a homeless shelter and 33% returned to prison. Among the study participants with a record of shelter use prior to incarceration, however, roughly 45% entered a homeless shelter and 42% returned to prison.

over from incarceration to homelessness, and vice versa, threatens to transform spells of incarceration or homelessness into more long-term patterns of social exclusion.”<sup>27</sup> Directing housing assistance to individuals with a history of residential instability before incarceration could reduce the rate of homelessness and re-incarceration among the re-entry population.<sup>28</sup>

## Conclusion

Many formerly incarcerated individuals end up in unstable housing arrangements after release. As the research above indicates, stable housing is a vital component of effective re-entry. By working to reduce the barriers that prevent formerly incarcerated individuals from accessing stable housing, advocates can reduce recidivism and improve public safety and community wellbeing. ■

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<sup>27</sup>*Id.* at 142.

<sup>28</sup>*Id.* at 151; see also CORP. FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUS., GETTING OUT WITH NOWHERE TO GO: THE CASE FOR RE-ENTRY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, available at [http://www.csh.org/\\_data/global/images/ReEntryBooklet.pdf](http://www.csh.org/_data/global/images/ReEntryBooklet.pdf). Research shows that supportive housing—permanent affordable housing linked to services—works to break the cycle of homelessness and incarceration.

## Recent Cases

The following are brief summaries of recently reported federal and state cases that should be of interest to housing advocates. Copies of the opinions can be obtained from a number of sources including the cited reporter, Westlaw,<sup>1</sup> Lexis,<sup>2</sup> or, in some instances, the court’s website.<sup>3</sup> Copies of the cases are *not* available from NHLP.

### Housing Choice Voucher Program: Police Report Insufficient to Establish Drug-Related Criminal Activity

*Weekes v. Boston Hous. Auth.*, No. 09H784CV00531 (Mass. Hous. Ct. Dec. 10, 2009). In terminating a voucher tenant’s assistance, a hearing officer relied on a police report stating that officers seized clear plastic bags containing a substance “believed to be Class D marijuana” from the tenant’s apartment. The court found that the statements in the police report, standing alone, were insufficient to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the substance seized from the tenant’s apartment was marijuana. The court therefore found that the hearing officer’s conclusion that the tenant allowed her apartment to be used for drug-related criminal activity in violation of her Section 8 lease was legally erroneous. The court vacated the hearing officer’s decision and ordered the housing authority to reinstate the tenant’s voucher.

### Housing Choice Voucher Program: Evidence Supported Hearing Officer’s Finding that Tenant Was Evicted

*Morford-Garcia v. Metro. Council Hous. & Redev. Agency*, 2009 WL 4909435 (Minn. Ct. App. Dec. 22, 2009) (unreported). An owner filed an eviction action against a voucher tenant. The parties later entered into a settlement agreeing to a mutual termination of the lease. The settlement stated that if the tenant violated its terms, the landlord would be entitled to an immediate writ of recovery. The tenant violated the settlement, and a writ of recovery was issued but later canceled. The tenant argued that the record did not support the hearing officer’s finding that she was evicted. The court disagreed, finding that an eviction judgment must have been entered in the owner’s favor, or else a writ of recovery would not have been issued. The court also found that there was substantial evidence to support the

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.westlaw.com>.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.lexis.com>.

<sup>3</sup>For a list of courts that are accessible online, see <http://www.uscourts.gov/links.html> (federal courts) and <http://www.ncsc.dni.us/COURT/SITES/courts.htm#state> (for state courts). See also <http://www.courts.net>.

## **Studies on Effectiveness of Housing Former Offenders**

### **National Housing Law Project, Housing Law Bulletin, Volume 40, "The Importance of Stable Housing for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals"**

**([http://www.nhlp.org/files/Importance%20of%20Stable%20Housing%20for%20Formerly%20Incarcerated\\_0.pdf](http://www.nhlp.org/files/Importance%20of%20Stable%20Housing%20for%20Formerly%20Incarcerated_0.pdf))**

"Research suggests that securing stable housing is crucial to successful re-entry. The study of men returning to the Cleveland metropolitan area found that obtaining stable housing within the first month after release inhibited re-incarceration. As stated in an Urban Institute study, 'The importance of finding a stable residence cannot be overestimated: men who found such housing within the first month after release were less likely to return to prison during the first year out.' The study of men returning to Chicago reinforces the idea. Study participants who reported living in their own apartment or house two months after release faced a lower risk of re-incarceration.

Moreover, a study of over 40,000 individuals returning to New York City from state correctional facilities reveals the correlation between shelter use and risk of recidivism. Individuals who entered a homeless shelter within the first two years after release faced a higher risk of re-incarceration. Perhaps more significantly, individuals who reported living in a shelter before incarceration faced a higher risk of both shelter use after release and in-incarceration. The figures suggest that "the crossing over from incarceration to homelessness, and vice versa, threatens to transform spells of incarceration or homelessness into more long-term patterns of social exclusion. " Directing housing assistance to individuals with a history of residential instability before incarceration could reduce the rate of homelessness and re-incarceration among the re-entry population."

### **Criminal Recidivism in Alaska, Alaska Judicial Council, January 2007**

"Offenders are much more likely to re-offend or be remanded to custody during the first year after release, and especially during the first six months. Using existing resources for 're-entry' programs may be a cost-effective way to reduce recidivism by helping offenders to adjust to the expectations of employers, treatment providers, and others with whom they must interact. Re-entry programs can also deal with offenders' treatment needs, and help them find safe, sober housing."

### **In Our Backyard: Overcoming Community Resistance to Reentry Housing (A NIMY Toolkit)**

**([http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/TOOL\\_KIT\\_1-NIMBY\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/TOOL_KIT_1-NIMBY_FINAL.pdf))**

"Supportive housing programs provide stable and safe housing to homeless formerly incarcerated men and women alongside comprehensive and individualized services, such as education and vocational training, employment assistance and counseling, substance abuse treatment, access to medical and mental health care, family reunification counseling, and other specialized services directed at promoting independent living and reintegration into the community. There is growing evidence that supportive housing for homeless formerly incarcerated persons reduces recidivism, makes neighborhoods safer, promotes family re-unification, and is more humane and cost-effective than re-incarceration."

### **Alaska Prisoner Reentry Task Force Five-Year Prisoner Reentry Strategic Plan, 2011-2016**

**(<http://www.correct.state.ak.us/TskForce/documents/Five-Year%20Prisoner%20Reentry%20Plan.pdf>)**

"As rightly observed by the 2010 Council of State Governments Justice Center, '[w]ithout a stable residence, it is nearly impossible for newly released individuals to reconnect positively to a community.'

When individuals are released from prison or jail, the ability to access safe and secure housing within the community is crucial to their successful reentry. Studies have shown that the first month after release is a vulnerable period “during which the risk of becoming homeless and/or returning to criminal justice involvement is high.” Yet, in most communities to which individuals return after incarceration, accessible and affordable housing is in exceedingly short supply. The additional challenges unique to people with criminal histories make it even more difficult for them to obtain stable housing.

More often than not, when these individuals are not linked to the services and supports that could facilitate their successful reintegration; they end up back in jail for either violating the conditions of their release or for committing a new crime. According to the 2007 Alaska Judicial Council recidivism study, one of the greatest contributing factors to recidivism was indigence, a condition impacting an individual’s ability to find housing.

Historically, the ADOC has performed insufficient prerelease planning to educate soon to be released prisoners on housing options or services in their communities. Soon the ADOC intends to implement its Offender Reentry Program that will provide convicted felons with an Individual Reentry Plan addressing, among other things, the prisoner’s plans for housing. To what extent institutional probation officers will be able to go beyond ascertaining if the prisoner has housing to actually working proactively to help the prisoner find housing prior to release remains unknown at this time.

Even if probation officers had lower caseloads and thus more time to work proactively with the probationer, the lack of accessible and affordable housing stock in most of Alaska’s communities makes it difficult even with the most proactive efforts on the part of probationer officer and probationer alike.”